

## VISION STATEMENT

An exceptional, developmentally appropriate, early childhood ministry, grounded in Christian values, open to all, that develops and nurtures the unique potential of each child in partnership with the family

## MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of St. Paul Early Childhood Program is to offer an environment for the preschool child in our parish community that encourages developmental skills that are age appropriate. Religious values will be incorporated in the curriculum as well as in the attitudes of the staff. Our hope is that this program would promote families' visions of their own unique mission, sanctity, gifts, and strengths for the service of their own families, the Church and society.

## ENROLLMENT POLICY

St. Paul Early Childhood Program (SPECP) admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin in administration of its educational or admissions policies. Pre-registration is open to presently enrolled students and their siblings first, members of St. Paul second, and the community at large last.

## ENROLLMENT REQUIREMENTS

The following are necessary for enrollment:

- Completed registration forms
- Registration fee
- Current immunization record with signature of physician
- Children must be the minimum stated age by September 1 to be eligible for a class
- Signed Parent Policy Agreement Form
- Children in 3 & 4 year old classes must be toilet trained

## THE EARLY CHILDHOOD CLASSES

The following classes are offered by SPECP, all classes meet from 9:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

<i>Age</i>	<i>Days</i>	<i>Staff/Child Ratio</i>
1 Year: Bunny Lamb	Mon., Wed. and Fri. Tue. and Thurs.	2:10
2 Year: Monkey, Bear Cub Kangaroo, Panda	Mon., Wed. and Fri. Tue. and Thurs.	2:10
3Year: Tiger Giraffe	Mon., Wed. and Fri. Tue. and Thurs.	2:15
4 Year: Eagle, Owl, & Hawk Falcon	Mon., Wed. and Fri. Tue. and Thurs.	1:10

*Parents are expected to support and uphold school policies. Without this cooperation and confirmation from the parents, a double standard exists between the home and school which is counterproductive to the student's development and the school's effectiveness.*

## **POLICIES**

- Tuition is due by the 1<sup>st</sup> and is considered delinquent after the 10<sup>th</sup> of each month. A \$20 late fee will be assessed if tuition is not paid by the 10<sup>th</sup>. If the 10<sup>th</sup> falls on a weekend or holiday, the tuition is due the day before.
- SPECP is intended to be a nine-month commitment. Tuition is a yearly fee which may be paid on a month by month basis. Credit is not given for a child's absence. This includes illnesses and holidays. Notice of withdrawal from the program must be given, in writing, one month in advance.
- Families with more than one child in the program will pay full tuition for the first child and 90% tuition for each additional child.
- We encourage the children to bring educational items for *Show and Tell*. Your child's teacher arranges Show and Tell. **NO GUNS OR WEAPONS ARE ALLOWED.**
- We are required to have monthly fire drills. Please explain this to your child so that he/she will not be frightened when this occurs. Explain that it is only a practice so they will know what to do in case of a real fire.
- If a child is asked to leave the program, all remaining tuition will be refunded. Registration monies are not refundable or transferable.
- If you move during the year, please notify the Director of your new address and phone number in writing. It is critical that we be able to reach you in case of an emergency. Please keep home, work, and emergency contact's phone numbers up-to-date through the program office. If you will be at a phone number other than those listed on your child's registration form for the day, please leave that information in the program office.
- SPECP follows a modified schedule of the Clear Creek Independent School District.
- Our school day begins at 9:30 a.m. and ends promptly at 1:30 p.m. A fee of \$10.00 will be charged for each child picked up 15 minutes after dismissal time. Additional fees will be assessed for every 15 minutes thereafter at the discretion of the Director. Children arriving late or leaving early need to be checked in and out through the office.
- Visitors to the school must sign in at the office and wear a visitor's badge before entering the classroom.
- Parent drive-thru drop off and pick up are available from 9:25a.m.-9:35a.m. and 1:30p.m.-1:35p.m.
- Sick children should not attend class.

## **HOME AND SCHOOL RELATIONSHIP**

SPECP exists primarily for the purpose of assisting the Christian home and the Christian church in meeting their responsibilities to teach the Word of God and to provide a Christ-centered atmosphere, which will foster the development of young children. *If your family finds itself unable to meet the guidelines stated above, please do not hesitate to contact the Director so that alternative arrangements may be made.*

## **ESTABLISH A GOOD RELATIONSHIP WITH YOUR CHILD'S SCHOOL**

Parents are encouraged to visit school before enrolling their child. Make sure that the school has all the information needed about your child and family to provide good care. Parent involvement is an important part of a successful pre-school experience. Parents are encouraged to work with the staff to form a partnership between home and school. Drop in occasionally to observe how your child interacts with staff and other children and get a good picture of the day-to-day activities at school. Be careful not to disrupt activities. All visitors to school must sign the log in the ECP office, Room 6, before entering any classroom.

It's important to let the school know about situations at home that may affect how your child is doing in school. Circumstances that may affect your child's behavior at school include: change in work habits of a parent, an impending move, birth or future birth of a sibling, sickness of a family member or any change to the normal routine of your child's life.

## **CONFERENCES**

In an effort to maintain good communication between home and school we will schedule Parent/Teacher conferences in October. (This will be a student holiday.) Parents or teachers may schedule a conference at any time throughout the school year.

## **CONCERNS/COMPLAINTS**

In the event that you have a concern about your child that you feel is not being handled appropriately the following is the process we will follow in order to resolve your concern.

1. Schedule a conference with your child's teacher(s) to discuss the issue.
2. If after the scheduled conference with your child's teacher(s) you feel that your concern has not been addressed then: put your concern in writing, turn it into the director and schedule an appointment with the director.
3. The parent/guardian, teacher and director will meet to discuss the concern in an attempt to resolve the concern.
4. Within 21 business days the parent/guardian will receive a written statement from the meeting about the concern.
5. If the parent/guardian still is not satisfied with the resolution they may take the matter to the parish administrator and pastor for further review.

## **DAILY ADMISSION POLICY**

Please make every effort to be on time. Classes begin promptly at 9:30 a.m. and end at 1:30 p.m. Your child misses out on the continuity of the day when they arrive late. If your child arrives late

(after 9:45 a.m.) or leaves school early (before 1:20 p.m.) you must sign them out through the office sign-out log in Room 6. Parents are expected to be prompt in picking up their child at dismissal time. There will be a fee of \$10.00 for each child picked up 15 minutes after dismissal time and for each 15 minutes thereafter, at the discretion of the Director.

- NO CHILD WILL BE ALLOWED TO LEAVE WITH A PERSON WHO IS NOT LISTED ON THE REGISTRATION FORMS.
- IDENTIFICATION WILL BE REQUIRED
- IF THE TEACHER DOES NOT RECOGNIZE THE PERSON PICKING UP YOUR CHILD, THAT PERSON MUST COME TO THE OFFICE WITH A VALID PHOTO ID. A PHOTOCOPY WILL BE MADE AND PLACED IN YOUR CHILD'S FILE.

### **PARENT PICK-UP & DROP-OFF**

Parents should be advised that the painted curbs areas directly in front of the church are no parking zones. *Do not park in the fire lanes when dropping off and picking up your child.* Parents and children should enter the building through the double glass doors. The wooden doors at the end of the education wing are an emergency exit. An alarm will sound if these doors are opened during the school day.

Teachers can chat briefly with about your child's day but this is not the time for a lengthy conference. School-wide conferences are held in Oct. If you feel the need to conference with your child's teacher during the school year, please contact her to make arrangements for this.

We understand the complexity of transporting small children and their belongings and have provided a drive-thru service. The drive-thru is located at the far end of the classroom wing. Hours for drive-thru are 9:25a.m.-9:35a.m. and 1:30p.m.-1:35p.m. Use of this service is optional and parents wishing to participate in it must check the appropriate box on the policy page at the back of this handbook.

### **SPECIAL HELPERS**

At various times during the school year the children may be treated to elementary school or junior or senior high school helper. A notice will be posted alerting you to this effect.

### **ILLNESSES AND ACCIDENTS**

Please use your own good judgment in determining whether or not your child should attend school. In general, a child who is too ill to participate in outdoor activities should remain at home until able to participate in the school program. Children should remain home with the following symptoms: sore throat, acute cough, green/yellow discharge from nose, diarrhea, headache, vomiting, fever, rash, upset stomach, toothache, discharge from eyes, extreme tiredness, or any communicable disease. Your child must be free of fever, diarrhea, and vomiting for 24 hours before returning to school. CHILDREN WILL BE SENT HOME IF, IN THE OPINION OF THE TEACHER OR ANOTHER STAFF MEMBER, A CHILD IS TOO ILL TO REMAIN IN THE SCHOOL. The parents or guardian will be responsible for picking up the child and should inform the staff of any special arrangements made.

If your child becomes ill at school, you will be called immediately. If we cannot reach you or your emergency numbers, we will obtain emergency care through a clinic, hospital, or private doctor as directed by you on the school application form. If your child is hurt at school and doesn't need medical attention, an accident/incident report will be filled out within 24 hours. A parent or guardian signature is required on this form in accordance with Child Care Licensing.

**SPECP WILL NOT GIVE MEDICATION TO CHILDREN.** If a child is on medication that needs to be administered during school hours, the parent must make arrangements to do so himself/herself.

**COMMUNICABLE DISEASE CHART**

Compliance with the exclusions listed below is required for conformance to the Minimum Standards of the Texas Department of Human Services. Please call the Director as soon as possible if your child contracts these or any other communicable diseases. If we find that your child has been exposed to a communicable illness we will notify you.

<i><b>DISEASE</b></i>	<i><b>READMISSION CRITERIA</b></i>
Chicken Pox	When all blisters have crusted over
Head Lice	When one medicated shampoo or lotion has been given
Impetigo	When treatment has begun
Pink Eye (Conjunctivitis)	Release by physician
Streptococcal infections (including Scarlet Fever)	24 hours after antibiotic treatment has begun and fever has subsided

**DISCIPLINE POLICY**

Each child enrolled in SPECP is loved by God and valued by our Staff. Staff members are genuinely concerned that the most positive environment possible be maintained at all times. A Christ-centered atmosphere of love and acceptance of individual personalities pervades.

In order to provide a safely structured environment, general class rules are established for each classroom. The rules are reviewed frequently so those children will learn expected behaviors. Children choose to follow the rules, or they choose sitting out. Good behavior is rewarded and children attempting to change negative behavior patterns are reinforced.

The staff reviews positive discipline strategies with the Director and discusses ways to help restructure individual inappropriate behavior. Parents are notified of behavior changes and are requested to help the teacher modify behavior. If a child were to become dangerous to himself or others, he/she would be firmly held and separated from the rest of the children.

If a child's behavior does not change through positive reinforcement the Director, the board, and the parents will discuss the next course of action.

## **DISCHARGE OF A STUDENT**

SPECP reserves the right to discharge any student if:

- The staff and Director agree that a specific child's needs are not being met by SPECP. In such a case, the parents and Director will meet to discuss the optional programs available to the child.
- A child has toileting problems that greatly interfere with teaching/learning time.
- A parent or guardian demonstrates unwillingness to comply with the fee collection method as outlined in the "Policies" section of the handbook.
- A parent or guardian demonstrates willful disregard for the medical, daily admission, discipline, or other stated policies of the school.
- For any other reason that the Director deems necessary.

## **DRESS CODE**

Use good judgment in dressing your child for class activities. Children should come to school comfortably dressed in washable play clothes. Please send your child to school in practical shoes that will stay on throughout the day. All clothing should be labeled with your child's name. In cooler weather, please dress your child for outside play.

## **PLAYGROUND**

Playground time is an important part of the curriculum. Children are encouraged to run, climb, jump and otherwise use their large muscles. Choice of activities is encouraged as long as there is no violation of safety, courtesy or potential damage to equipment and property. Our philosophy during this outdoor time is to encourage a sense of cooperation and trust rather than competition. We want to foster the expansion of each individual's abilities rather than set up a "winner/loser" situation. The playground is open for use before and after school hours; however, we ask parents to closely supervise their children and abide by the rules posted on the fence in the playground. In inclement weather children will play in Beck Hall using gross motor skill equipment.

## **SCHOOL CLOSINGS DUE TO WEATHER**

SPECP will be closed for weather related problems if Clear Creek Independent School District is closed. Please tune into local TV or radio stations if weather is threatening.

## **SNACK**

A planned snack time is an important part of the class day. Parents will receive a snack schedule from their child's teacher stating the day your child is responsible to bring snack as well as what to bring. Per state licensing requirements all snacks brought to school should be in commercially sealed packaging. No homemade food may be served. Please check with your child's teacher to learn of any students with food allergies in your child's class.

## LUNCH

Make sure that your child eats breakfast before coming to school. Each child should bring a lunch kit, labeled with his name, which includes a drink. Here is a list of healthy lunch ideas:

- ❖ At least one fruit: strawberries, melon, cut-up grapes, apple or orange.
- ❖ At least one vegetable: sliced cucumber, carrots, broccoli, jicama (include dipping sauce if your child will not eat “plain” veggies).
- ❖ At least one protein: turkey or chicken sandwiches, tuna, peanut butter, hard boiled egg, yogurt or cheese.
- ❖ Dessert (optional): fruit is already sweet, so limit this choice to 2 cookies or crackers.
- ❖ Drink: stay away from highly sweetened juice drinks, small bottles of water fit well in lunch boxes.

The state of Texas recognizes certain foods as choking hazards, examples of these foods are; whole grapes, whole hot dogs, popcorn and nuts. The teachers can not allow your child to eat these foods in their classrooms. Please do not send them in your child’s lunch, even if they can eat them safely at home.

Teachers are not able to leave the classroom to heat up food for children. St. Paul’s Early Childhood Program is not responsible for the nutritional content of the lunches served at school.

## BIRTHDAYS

Parents wishing to celebrate their child's birthday in the classroom with an edible treat should consult with the teacher. Birthday parties are not to be held at school. **Invitations to your child’s birthday party may only be distributed at school if every child in class receives one.**

## HOLIDAYS AND SPECIAL EVENTS

The following school-wide special events will be held during the school year: Your child’s teacher may schedule additional special days.

- Critter Carnival (Oct.)
- Thanksgiving Prayer Celebration (Nov.)
- Christmas/Birthday party for Jesus (Dec.)
- Go Texan Day (Feb.)
- Week of the Young Child (April)
- Easter Egg Hunt (March or April)
- End-of-the-Year Prayer Celebration (May)
- Water Day (May)

Parents are encouraged to participate in these special activities and events, and will be asked to provide supplies as well as to volunteer their help and cooperation. **We discourage gift giving in the classroom and ask that parents refrain from bringing handouts to school.**

## **ENRICHMENT CLASSES**

- Enrichment classes are open to children in our community whose age on Sept. 1, 2006 is between 1 and 5.
- Minimum number of 8 students per classroom. Enrollment is accepted on a first paid first enrolled basis.
- A single summer enrichment session will be offered for 2 weeks in June 2007.
- Registration for the summer enrichment session will be held simultaneously with fall registration.

## **AFTER SCHOOL ACTIVITIES**

A variety of after school activities are offered at ECP to extend the school day until 2:15. Parents must register their child for these optional classes. Fees for these classes are to be paid to the individual programs. Parents are expected to follow the guidelines listed above as far as prompt pick-up of their child at the conclusion of the class.

## **EARLY BIRD PROGRAM**

An optional before school program is available to students in ECP. Children enrolled in Early Bird may come to school at 8:30. Cost is \$5.00 per use and must be pre-paid by the month. Parents need to register their child to participate in this program. You must call by 10:30 a.m. the day before you plan to use Early Bird to reserve you child's place.

## **EVACUATION PLAN**

The following is the evacuation plan in case of a fire, chemical spill, or explosion:

If our building becomes damaged, we will take the children to St. John Hospital, Nassau Bay. If we must evacuate the area, the children will be taken to Ed White Youth Center in Seabrook, or to St. Bernadette Catholic Church in Clear Lake City. The children will be cared for until a parent or designated adult arrives. The Director will inform the Nassau Bay Police Department as to the whereabouts of the children and parents are to call there to determine from where to pick-up their child.

## IMMUNIZATION REQUIREMENTS

The following is the recommended schedule for childhood vaccinations. Vaccination records should be kept current in the ECP office.

### AGE GROUP

### REQUIRED VACCINE

*by 12 mos.*

One dose MMR vaccine received on or after 1<sup>st</sup> birthday  
Two doses Hib vaccine  
Two doses polio vaccine  
Three doses DTP/DtaP vaccine  
Two doses of Hep B  
Three doses PCV7 vaccine  
One dose varicella vaccine

*by 19 mos*

all previous vaccines **plus**  
one dose polio vaccine  
one dose DTP/DtaP vaccine  
one dose Hep B  
one dose PCV7

*Age 2 years*

all previous vaccines **plus**  
1 dose Heb A vaccine (+booster dose 6-18 mos. later)

## TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF FAMILY AND PROTECTIVE SERVICES

A copy of the minimum standards is available for you to review at school. You can also request a copy of these standards from your local day-care licensing office. A list of these offices may be found on the PRS website: [www.tdprs.state.tx.us](http://www.tdprs.state.tx.us) or by calling the Child Care Information Line at 1-800-862-5252.

## IMPORTANT NUMBERS

St. Paul's Early Childhood Program Office	281-333-0176
St. Paul's Church Office	281-333-3891
St. Paul's St. Vincent de Paul Society	281-333-2509
Nassau Bay City Hall	281-333-4211
Nassau Bay Police Dept.	281-333-4200
Child Care Information Line	1-800-862-5252
Childcare Licensing	713-767-2534
Poison Control	1-800-222-1222
Child Abuse Hotline	1-800-252-5400
ECP e-mail	<a href="mailto:kids@stpaulcatholic.org">kids@stpaulcatholic.org</a>